

Gundam Wing: Like a Prayer

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Gundam Wing: Like a Prayer

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> LIKE A PRAYER: A Gundam Wing fanfic by Madamhydra

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vignette/teaser inspired by "Like A Prayer" by Madonna

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Heero Yuy was a person who ran away from nothing... unless the mission required it, of course. But if that was the case, what was he doing aimlessly wandering the streets in the middle of a cold, drizzly night?

(Because I'm an idiot....)

(Because I'm a coward....)

(Because I had to get away from *him*....)

He had stalked out of their current safehouse, trying to shut out the sound of Duo's voice calling his name. Now his ribs and rightknee twinged with every step, reminding him that he was nowhere near full recovery yet. And what would Duo have to say about all this?

/ Oi! Baka! What are you doing, wandering around in the rain like that? Are you TRYING to catch pneumonia on top of all those broken ribs? /

He shook his head sharply, struggling to push thoughts of Duo out of his mind. It didn't work, of course.

(Too late for simple solutions....)

He scowled as the drizzle became a cold, steady rain. The last thing he needed was to contract some respiratory infection. As he hunted for some temporary shelter, a thin band of warm yellow light suddenly spilled across the damp concrete just in front of his feet.

He turned sharply, tracking the light to its source, and found himself staring at an old stone church, tucked neatly between two empty stores. The exterior of the building was dark, but one of the doors stood ajar... almost like an invitation.

Just around the corner was the local strip, with its raucous bars and dance clubs. But this particular spot was strangely quiet. Without knowing exactly why, he stepped into the churchyard and followed that thin band of light to the front door of the church. The heavy door silently swung open with the barest touch of his hand.

Heero warily peered inside. The interior of the church was deserted, but only temporarily. Obviously someone spent a great deal of time and effort taking care of the place. As the rain became a downpour, he shrugged impatiently and stepped inside. There were no artificial lights to be seen. The only source of illumination in the entire building appeared to be the numerous burning candles.

He quickly scanned the chamber. It seemed cluttered to him -- every inch of the interior was covered by carvings, murals, or statues. His eyes coldly noted, then dismissed the golden crucifix suspended over the altar. The nearby life-sized figure of a serenely smiling woman, her hair modestly covered, left him totally unmoved.

His lips thinned as he caught sight of a wall covered with pictures of fluttering angels with delicate white wings. Their filmy pastel robes and pale blond hair swirled against a painted blue sky as they all gazed vacantly upward with rapt expression on their faces. The angels reminded him unpleasantly of Relena. The same blindly rapt expression frequently appeared on her face when she talked to him... or rather, talked AT him. And after their most recent confrontation, the last thing he needed was to be reminded of her.

He uttered a low, hard snort of disgust. Useless dreams and fantasy. They wouldn't last a second if exposed to the harsh light of reality. He started to turn away, then stopped short as something caught his eye.

Amid all the ridiculously fragile angels flapping around in the mural, there was....

....an angel with black wings....

In sharp contrast to the insipid paleness of the other figures in the church, this angel was dark, with magnificent black wings that almost seemed to blend in with its swirling black robes and a long, twisted rope of rich chestnut brown hair.

And instead of the blindly ecstatic expressions of the other angels, the dark angel seemed to be really smiling -- grinning, almost -- in an expression of joyous mischief that seemed to invite the viewer to join him in laughter. But Heero's critical eyes could also see the underlying fierceness to that joy... he could see the strength behind that smile.

He knew that sort of smile well. He constantly saw it on the cockpit monitors of Gundam Wing. He warily stepped closer to get a look at the mural, then froze as a strange shiver ran down his spine.

(What the....!?)

He blinked several times, but he hadn't been imagining things.

The eyes.... The dark angel had brilliant, blue-violet eyes that seemed to look directly at him.

He jerked his gaze away and took another swift look around the church. Compared to this playful dark angel, all the other statues and pictures seemed to fade into the background. For all its superficial darkness, that particular angel was the most vibrant... the most REAL thing in the entire church.

There was a strange tightness in his throat as he sank down onto a nearby pew.

(Duo....)

He stared blankly at the painting, then shook his head sharply at the ridiculous thoughts running through his head. Duo, an angel? He could just picture the long-haired pilot hopping up in and down in outrage.

/ Me, an angel? Are you nuts, Heero!? Hel-loooo! I'm Shinigami, remember? Black death, complete with scythe, man? Did you crack your head or something? Hey guys! This can't be Heero. It's got to be an impostor... a pod person...! /

But the likeness was absolutely uncanny. As he stared up at the dark angel on the wall, he gradually took in the other parts of this particular mural. He never saw the point in spending valuable time and energy trying to appreciate what people called 'fine art', but the story in this mural was simple for even someone like himself to understand.

At the very bottom of the wall, demons and monsters clawed their way skyward. On the upper half of the wall, the pale fragile angels hovered, their eyes fixed on some point just beyond the ceiling, blindly oblivious to the danger under their feet. And the only obstacle keeping the demons from swarming upward and tearing those fools apart was that single dark angel....

....a lone warrior....

Of the angels in the church, it was the only one carrying a weapon... it was the only one actually *doing* anything purposeful. All the others was just floating around.

He scowled angrily.

(Idiots... they're happy to leave all the dirty work up to you, don't they?) he silently asked the dark one. (They don't care at all, do they? They have no idea of what dangers you face, the risks you must take.)

(After all, even angels can be destroyed... even angels can bleed....)

For a horrified instant, his breath clogged in his throat as he thought he saw a thin ribbon of liquid scarlet seep downward across the dark angel's face....

He gritted his teeth and brutally reined in his rampaging imagination with the same stern inner discipline that had governed his existence for so long. But he couldn't suppress a faint sigh of relief to see the streak of red was gone. That particular image was all too familiar to him.

How many times had he seen Duo bleeding?

(Damn.)

What was he doing here, wasting energy getting angry over a stupid picture on a wall?

(And when did I ever waste time worrying about fairness?)

War is never fair. He accepted that as a fact. But the bitterness that settled like a knot in his chest refused to go away. Because it wasn't fair. It wasn't fair that the dark angel should struggle against the monsters, alone and unappreciated, while the other angels blithely ignored it. It deserved better.

(Duo deserves better....)

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